

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, PINT, PE
SUBJ: INFORMATION SYSTEM CHIEF BLASTS INDEPENDENT PERIODICALS

SUMMARY. GOP WARNS INDEPENDENT MAGAZINES THAT IT WILL NOT TOLERATE WHAT IT CONSIDERS TO BE IRRESPONSIBLE JOURNALISM IN VIOLATION OF A "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT". THE GOP INFORMATION CHIEF THREATENED MAGAZINES WITH CLOSURE BUT HOPED THIS WOULD NOT BE NECESSARY. MAGAZINES WILL BE UNDER PRESSURE TO EXERCISE GREATER AUTO-CENSORSHIP. END SUMMARY.

1. ON APRIL 25 ARMY GENERAL CESAR VINATEA MONTENEGRO, CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEM (SINADI) DECLARED TO THE PRESS THAT INDEPENDENT MAGAZINES WERE ENGAGED IN A "LOVE OF LIBERTINAGE RATHER THAN FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION; THIS CAN NOT BE TOLERATED". VINATEA ACCUSED SOME MAGAZINES OF "SPOUTING VENOM FROM THE FIRST TO THE LAST PAGE". THE GOP MEDIA CZAR THEN RECALLED THE GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH MAGAZINES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE OPERATING. THE AGREEMENT, SAID VINATEA, CALLS FOR THE MAGAZINES TO SHOW "RESPECT FOR PERSONS AND FOR SYMBOLS OF THE COUNTRY, THE MILITARY AND THE POLICE". ALSO THE MAGAZINES ARE NOT TO ENCOURAGE ACTIVITIES CONSIDERED SUBVERSIVE OR CONTRIBUTORY TO NATIONAL DISUNITY. VINATEA ADDED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMPLYING WITH ITS DUTY BY ALLOWING "FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
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WHICH IS NEVERTHELESS BEING DISTORTED BY THE MAGAZINES".

2. VINATEA DECLARED THAT THE GOP BELIEVED IN DIALOGUE AND THEREFORE WOULD MEET AGAIN WITH MAGAZINE DIRECTORS IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT WISHES THESE PUBLICATIONS TO CONTRIBUTE TO "A SINCERE AND LOYAL DIALOGUE". VINATEA HINTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT HELP INSURE A MORE LOYAL DIALOGUE THROUGH

THE SOON-TO-BE-PROMULGATED PRESS LAW WHICH, HE SAID, WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE JUNTA ON APRIL 26.

3. PRESS SOURCES TELL THE EMBASSY THAT VINATEA CALLED MAGAZINE DIRECTORS TOGETHER THE WEEK OF APRIL 17 TO INFORM THEM THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS INCREASINGLY DISTURBED BY THE "IRRESPONSIBLE" HANDLING OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS. HE EXPRESSED PARTICULAR CONCERN WITH SCURRILOUS ATTACKS ON FORMER PRESIDENT VELASCO AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER FERNANDEZ MALDONADO CARRIED IN ABC (MANAGED BY AN APRISTA MILITANT BUT DISAUTHORIZED BY HAYA DE LA TORRE). VINATEA TOLD DIRECTORS THAT IF ABC DID NOT CEASE ITS ATTACKS, THEY WOULD ALL BE CLOSED.

COMMENT. THE GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT REFERRED TO BY VINATEA CONSISTED OF A MEETING BETWEEN MAGAZINE DIRECTORS AND INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS DURING WHICH CINEROS STATED THAT THE MAGAZINES COULD RE-OPEN UNDER THE ABOVE-STATED CONDITIONS. THE DIRECTORS HAVE CONSISTENTLY MAINTAINED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY DO NOT CONSIDER THEMSELVES BOUND BY AN AGREEMENT. ARTICLES IN SOME JOURNALS COULD BE CONSIDERED LIBELOUS, BUT THE GOP HAS NOT PROSECUTED, PERHAPS HOPING THAT POLITICAL PERSUASION WOULD BE A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE RESTRAINT. ALTHOUGH THE MAGAZINES ARE THREATENED WITH CLOSURE "IF IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR CONTINUES", THE GOP WILL PROBABLY BE RELUCTANT TO TAKE THAT STEP WHICH WOULD AFFECT ITS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE AND HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON MILGOV/CIVILIAN RELATIONSHIP. FOLLOWING THE RECENT MILITARY UNITY DISPLAY AND RECONFIRMATION IF OFFICE OF PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ, THE MAGAZINES MAY EXERCISE MORE RESTRAINT IN MATTERS WHICH THE MILITARY CONSIDERS MOST SENSITIVE. THIS RESTRAINT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LESS LIKELY, HOWEVER, TO EXTEND TO ECONOMIC POLICY OR TO MODERATION OF CRITICISM OF THE CIVILIAN ECONOMIC TEAM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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